

City of Columbia Press Releases

February 9-15, 2014

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Public Relations, Marketing and Media Department (P) 805-545-3020 | (F) 803-343-8719 pio@columbiasc.net | www.columbiasc.net

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Monday, February 10, 2014

Contact: Marli Drum at 803-776-7387

Columbia Animal Services Announces Special Valentine's Day Adoption Rates

Columbia Animal Services will run an adoption special for Valentine's Day this year. A special two-for-one rate will be applied to any adopted pair of cats and/or dogs and a \$14 discount will be applied to any single adoptions.

This special is valid Thursday, February 13 through Saturday, February 15, 2014. Give a shelter pet, or two, a loving home this Valentine's Day.

All animals are spay/neutered, microchipped, vaccinated and wormed. Canines are tested for heartworms and felines are tested for feline leukemia/aids.

The Columbia Animal Shelter is open Monday through Friday from 8:30 a.m. to 5 p.m. and Saturday from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. The shelter is located at 127 Humane Lane, Columbia, SC 29209 and can be reached by calling 803-776-7387.

For more information or to view adoptable pets, please visit www.petfinder.com.

Public Relations, Marketing and Media Department (P) 805-545-3020 | (F) 803-343-8719 pio@columbiasc.net | www.columbiasc.net

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Monday, February 10, 2014

Contact: Public Relations, Media & Marketing at 803.545.3020

New Date Set for City Of Columbia Tax Credits and Incentives Workshop for Local Business Owners

The City Of Columbia, the Columbia Empowerment Zone, Inc. and the Greater Columbia Chamber of Commerce have rescheduled the tax credits and incentives workshop for Thursday, February 27, 2014 from 5:30 to 7:30 p.m. at the Greater Columbia Chamber of Commerce, located at 930 Richland St.

The purpose of the workshop is to educate business owners on available federal and state tax incentives, including Empowerment Zone incentives.

"We are very excited to partner with the City of Columbia and the Greater Columbia Chamber of Commerce for this workshop," said *Alan Newcomb, CEO of RetroTax*. "At this event, we aim to ensure the local businesses receive every available tax credit and incentive to which it's entitled. We look forward to helping them reduce their tax liability while demonstrating our commitment to excellent customer service."

The workshop is free and open to all business owners and tax preparers. Those interested are encouraged to RSVP at http://columbiataxincentivesworkshop.eventbrite.com.

For more information on the workshop, please contact Felicia Maloney, executive director of the Columbia Empowerment Zone, Inc., at 803-733-8438. For more information on the Greater Columbia Chamber of Commerce Small and Minority Business Outreach, please contact Lee Catoe, V.P. for Community Affairs, 803-733-1153 or Chamber membership information please contact Jenifer King, Account Executive, at 803-733-1121.



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Monday, February 10, 2014

We Are Columbia

Contact: Community Development at 803-545-3373

The City of Columbia Community Development Loan Committee will meet on Friday, February 14, 2014 at 8:30 a.m. at 1225 Lady Street, Suite 102. Please see the attached agenda for review.



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Monday, February 10, 2014

Contact: Libby Gober at 803-545-3061

Councilwoman Devine Open House Cancelled

City Councilwoman Tameika Isaac Devine's February Open House for **Wednesday**, **February 12**, has been cancelled due to uncertain weather conditions. A new date and time will be released within the coming weeks.

For more information, please call 803-545-3061



pio@columbiasc.net | www.columbiasc.net

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Monday, February 10, 2014

Contact: Leshia Utsey at 803-545-3020

City of Columbia to Participate in Heart Walk

The City has declared a walking team to participate in the American Heart Association's 2014 Heart Walk on March 22, which will help support the fight against heart disease. The entire community is encouraged to join the city's team, Heart of The City Walkers, at www.heartwalk.org.

To sign up, visit www.heartwalk.org, search and select the "Heart Walk 2013-2014 Midlands, SC" event, and select "Register" then "Join A Team." This walk will be another major step towards increasing awareness of heart disease in the City of Columbia and throughout the Midlands.

The city has made many efforts to encourage the community to take part in the American Heart Association's cause. The city hosted a Go Red For Women event on February 7 to recognize the fight against heart disease and to support the women affected. The city also officially proclaimed the day as Go Red Day in the City of Columbia, and a proclamation was presented to local representatives of the American Heart Association.

City Hall will also "go red" for the entire month of February. City Hall will be illuminated at night with a warm red glow to remind citizens about the impact of heart disease in the community. Red wreaths that include the official "red dress" logo of the national Go Red campaign will also adorn City Hall.

For more information, contact Leshia Utsey at 803-545-3020 or lutsey@columbiasc.net

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For Immediate Release

February 10, 2014

Contact: Public Relations, Marketing and Media at 803-545-3020

City of Columbia Prepares for Possible Winter Weather

City of Columbia officials are urging residents to closely monitor the weather forecasts and use extreme caution on the roadways.

911 CENTER

- Effective immediately, Emergency Standby Status is activated for all CRC personnel.
 CRC 9-1-1 will be staffed at appropriate staffing levels to accommodate the anticipated increased call volume. Adjustments to staffing levels will be made (up or down) as the weather dictates.
- 911 should be called for emergencies only. This number is active and monitored around the clock (24 hours a day/every day).
- For non-emergency situations, citizens may call 252-2911. This number is active and monitored around the clock (24 hours a day/ every day).

COLUMBIA POLICE DEPARTMENT

During inclement weather the City of Columbia Police Department's Assisting Columbia's Elderly Program (A.C.E) and Pro-Active Community Enforcement Unit (P.A.C.E.) will be making phone calls and checking in on the programs most vulnerable citizens. For those senior citizens that call Columbia Police Department's front desk (545-3500) or 9-1-1 Communications (252-2911) for assistance, a police officer may be dispatched for assistance to determine the degree of distress. When possible police officers will notify designated relatives and / or friends who will provide necessary assistance to the senior.

WARMING STATIONS

• Public "Warming Stations" will open on a 24 hour basis beginning XXX through XXX. The "Warming Stations", located at Hyatt Park (950 Jackson Avenue) and Martin Luther King, Jr. Park (2300 Greene Street), is a courtesy service provided by the City of Columbia in order to provide a warm, comfortable environment for persons or families who may find that they need access to additional heating sources during the freezing temperatures. The "Warming Stations" will be open around the clock during the operations period (on a 24 hour basis).

PUBLIC WORKS

The City of Columbia Public Works Department is monitoring for potential inclement weather and will have staff on standby to respond if conditions warrant.

- All divisions are now taking steps to ensure that vehicles and equipment are ready and putting crews on stand-by to work as needed during the weather event.
- Street Division is mixing brine, sand and salt in preparation for the storm and will begin spraying road surfaces today.
- Street Division crews will start salting and sanding streets, bridges, fire department driveways and other priority locations as the forecast dictates.
- The Solid Waste Division is monitoring the forecast and will make decisions on delaying
 collection as the situation develops. There is no solid waste collection on Wednesdays, so
 weather will not impact collection that day. Crews will be on stand-by for Wednesday to
 assist as needed with debris removal.
- Forestry and Beautification will assist with all non-power line related limb removal.

Columbia Animal Services has issued the following pet care tips:

- Shelter If at all possible, bring all pets indoors. If this is not possible, shelter should protect the animal from the elements and include plenty of bedding that the animal can burrow into if needed.
- Food Pets burn more energy to stay warm. Make sure your pet is getting a little extra food during colder months to accommodate for this.
- Water Check your pet's water frequently to make sure it hasn't frozen. Do not use metal bowls or buckets for water when it's cold. Their tongues can stick to the metal. Use plastic or some other material.
- Cars Cats and other small mammals will sometimes crawl up under the hoods of cars to get out of the elements or for the warmth of a recently run motor. Be sure to beat on the hood or blow the horn of your car before starting it to scare possible animals away.

- Also be mindful of coolant and antifreeze. These taste sweet to animals but can be deadly a poison for them.
- Walking If salt or other chemicals have been used to melt ice, be sure to clean them off your pet's paws. They can harm them. Also, just because your pet has a fur coat of its own, it may not be enough to protect it from the cold. Putting a sweater on your pet might be a good idea.

Winter weather tips for residents, courtesy of the **South Carolina Emergency Management Division**:

- Be aware that black ice is almost invisible.
- Be especially careful on bridges, overpasses, tunnels and on secondary roads in the
 morning and late evening when the air temperature is changing faster than the pavement
 temperature.
- Never brake suddenly while driving on ice. Applying pressure to your brakes while on
 ice will cause your vehicle to skid. Be sure to check your vehicles braking system and
 tire inflation.
- Keep your distance. The distance needed to stop on ice is twice as long as under normal driving circumstances. Keep at least a three-car distance from the vehicle in front of you.



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For Immediate Release

February 10, 2014

Contact: Public Relations, Marketing and Media at 803-545-3020

City Manager Convenes Emergency Preparedness Team and Announces Emergency Preparedness Operations

City Manager Teresa Wilson met with the City of Columbia's Emergency Preparedness Team this afternoon to review the operations that are currently underway to prepare the City for a pending winter storm and the possible accumulation of ice. "As we prepare for another winter storm, we continue to be focused primarily on the safety of our citizens. If weather projections are correct, this storm may bring more ice into the Midlands than the previous storm and we are taking all precautions to prepare our roadways and staff our public safety departments at full force," City Manager Teresa Wilson stated.

911 CENTER

- Effective immediately, Emergency Standby Status is activated for all CRC personnel. CRC 9-1-1 will be staffed at appropriate staffing levels to accommodate the anticipated increased call volume. Adjustments to staffing levels will be made (up or down) as the weather dictates.
- 911 should be called for emergencies only. This number is active and monitored around the clock (24 hours a day/every day).
- For non-emergency situations, citizens may call 252-2911. This number is active and monitored around the clock (24 hours a day/ every day).

COLUMBIA POLICE DEPARTMENT

• During inclement weather the City of Columbia Police Department's Assisting Columbia's Elderly Program (A.C.E) and Pro-Active Community Enforcement Unit (P.A.C.E.) will be making phone calls and checking in on the programs most vulnerable citizens. For those senior citizens that call Columbia Police Department's

front desk (545-3500) or 9-1-1 Communications (252-2911) for assistance, a police officer may be dispatched for assistance to determine the degree of distress. When possible police officers will notify designated relatives and / or friends who will provide necessary assistance to the senior.

WARMING STATIONS

• The opening date and time for the warming stations will be determined as we monitor weather conditions. The "Warming Stations", located at Hyatt Park (950 Jackson Avenue) and Martin Luther King, Jr. Park (2300 Greene Street), is a courtesy service provided by the City of Columbia in order to provide a warm, comfortable environment for persons or families who may find that they need access to additional heating sources during the freezing temperatures.

PUBLIC WORKS

- The City of Columbia Public Works Department is monitoring for potential inclement weather and will have staff on standby to respond if conditions warrant.
- All divisions are now taking steps to ensure that vehicles and equipment are ready and putting crews on stand-by to work as needed during the weather event.
- Street Division is mixing brine, sand and salt in preparation for the storm and will begin spraying road surfaces today.
- Street Division crews will start salting and sanding streets, bridges, fire department driveways and other priority locations as the forecast dictates.
- The Solid Waste Division is monitoring the forecast and will make decisions on delaying collection as the situation develops. There is no solid waste collection on Wednesdays, so weather will not impact collection that day. Crews will be on stand-by for Wednesday to assist as needed with debris removal.
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- Food Pets burn more energy to stay warm. Make sure your pet is getting a little extra food during colder months to accommodate for this.
- Water Check your pet's water frequently to make sure it hasn't frozen. Do not use metal bowls or buckets for water when it's cold. Their tongues can stick to the metal. Use plastic or some other material.

- Cars Cats and other small mammals will sometimes crawl up under the hoods of cars to get out of the elements or for the warmth of a recently run motor. Be sure to beat on the hood or blow the horn of your car before starting it to scare possible animals away.
- Also be mindful of coolant and antifreeze. These taste sweet to animals but can be deadly a poison for them.
- Walking If salt or other chemicals have been used to melt ice, be sure to clean them off
 your pet's paws. They can harm them. Also, just because your pet has a fur coat of its
 own, it may not be enough to protect it from the cold. Putting a sweater on your pet
 might be a good idea.

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 tire inflation.
- Keep your distance. The distance needed to stop on ice is twice as long as under normal driving circumstances. Keep at least a three-car distance from the vehicle in front of you.



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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

February 11, 2014

Contact: Leshia Utsey @ 422-3057

CITY OFFICES TO CLOSE AT 11:00 A.M. TODAY DUE TO INCLEMENT WEATHER

Due to the extreme winter weather conditions and the high possibility of ice on local roads, the City of Columbia will close today at 11:00 a.m., for all city operations, with the exception of essential services. A decision regarding operations for City of Columbia tomorrow will be made overnight and media outlet will be notified.

City leadership will continue to monitor the weather and will make any necessary changes if the weather situation worsens overnight. Any updates regarding public safety conditions will be provided as information becomes available.

All garbage and recyclables will continue to be collected on their regular schedule today.



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For Immediate Release

February 11, 2014

Contact: Public Relations, Marketing and Media at 803-545-3020

City Manager Teresa Wilson Announces Winter Weather Emergency Preparedness Operations

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Customer Care Center

• The Customer Care Center will operate on a 24-hour basis. Citizens can call 803-545-3300 for all **non-emergency** assistance during the winter storm.

COLUMBIA POLICE DEPARTMENT

• During inclement weather the City of Columbia Police Department's Assisting Columbia's Elderly Program (A.C.E) and Pro-Active Community Enforcement Unit (P.A.C.E.) will be making phone calls and checking in on the programs most

vulnerable citizens. For those senior citizens that call Columbia Police Department's front desk (545-3500) or 9-1-1 Communications (252-2911) for assistance, a police officer may be dispatched for assistance to determine the degree of distress. When possible police officers will notify designated relatives and / or friends who will provide necessary assistance to the senior.

WARMING STATIONS

• Warming Stations will open at **6 p.m. Tuesday, February, 11, 2014** and will remain open on a 24-hour basis as weather conditions are monitored. The "Warming Stations", located at Hyatt Park (950 Jackson Avenue) and Martin Luther King, Jr. Park (2300 Greene Street), is a courtesy service provided by the City of Columbia in order to provide a warm, comfortable environment for persons or families who may find that they need access to additional heating sources during the freezing temperatures.

PUBLIC WORKS

- The City of Columbia Public Works Department is monitoring for potential inclement weather and will have staff on standby to respond if conditions warrant.
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 - Water Check your pet's water frequently to make sure it hasn't frozen. Do not use metal bowls or buckets for water when it's cold. Their tongues can stick to the metal. Use plastic or some other material.
 - Cars Cats and other small mammals will sometimes crawl up under the hoods of cars to get out of the elements or for the warmth of a recently run motor. Be sure to beat on the hood or blow the horn of your car before starting it to scare possible animals away.
- Also be mindful of coolant and antifreeze. These taste sweet to animals but can be deadly a poison for them.
 - Walking If salt or other chemicals have been used to melt ice, be sure to clean them off your pet's paws. They can harm them. Also, just because your pet has a fur coat of its own, it may not be enough to protect it from the cold. Putting a sweater on your pet might be a good idea.

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- Never brake suddenly while driving on ice. Applying pressure to your brakes while on ice will cause your vehicle to skid. Be sure to check your vehicles braking system and tire inflation.
- Keep your distance. The distance needed to stop on ice is twice as long as under normal driving circumstances. Keep at least a three-car distance from the vehicle in front of you.

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Tuesday, February 11, 2014

Contact: Dee Dee Fanning at 803-545-3048

City Of Columbia Now Accepting Applications for Hospitality and Accommodations Tax Grants

The City of Columbia is now accepting applications for Hospitality and Accommodations Tax grants. Applications, guidelines and instructions are all available online at www.columbiasc.net under the "Grants" page.

Accommodations Tax grants will be due Friday, March 14, 2014 at 5 p.m. This grant provides financial support to nonprofit organizations and their projects/events, whose mission is to attract tourists by promoting overnight accommodations in the City of Columbia.

Hospitality Tax grants will be due Friday, March 28, 2014 at 5 p.m. This grant provides financial support to nonprofit organizations and their projects/events, whose mission is to attract tourists by promoting dining in the City of Columbia.

To be eligible, the organization must be a nonprofit with documentation from the South Carolina Secretary of State's Office, with activities in the City of Columbia.

There is no funding available for Community Promotions grants at this time.

For more information, please contact Libby Gober at 803-545-3061, Dee Dee Fanning at 803-545-3048 or visit www.columbiasc.net.



For Immediate Release

February 11, 2014

Contact: Pamela Benjamin at 803-545-3008

City Manager Teresa Wilson Announces Candidates for Columbia Police Chief

Upon receipt from the Police Chief Search Committee and the City of Columbia's Human Resources Director, City Manager Teresa Wilson has announced the candidates for the Columbia Police Chief. The format for the next phase of the search process for the City of Columbia's Police Chief will begin on February 18, 2014. Five candidates will be engaged in a 3-day assessment process that will include the participation of the City Manager, Police Chief Search Committee, Community Stakeholders Panel and the citizens of Columbia.

"I remain committed to conducting a fair and transparent process that is open, engaging and inclusive. The collaborative efforts of our Search Committee and Community Stakeholders have been vital to this national search and I'm especially grateful for their time, diligence and dedication. Thanks to them, we have an amazing slate of candidates to consider. This position is critical to the future of our Capital City and one that I don't take lightly. I have no doubt that my decision will be difficult, but I will certainly use every ounce of information available to make the right choice for our citizens and communities," City Manager Teresa Wilson stated.

The five candidates that will participate in the assessment process include:

- Tony Fisher
- William Holbrook
- Bryan Norwood
- Charles Rapp
- Gregory Reese

Please see the attached document for details regarding each candidate.

A significant part of the process will include a public forum that will provide an opportunity for citizens to meet the candidates and submit questions for them to answer. The Police Chief Search Public Forum will be held at City Hall (Chambers), 1737 Main Street, on Wednesday, February 19, 2014 from 6:30 p.m. - 8:00 p.m. During the forum, candidates will respond to questions that have been submitted by citizens. Any citizen who would like to submit a question can email it to columbiahr@columbiasc.net or mail it to Gardner Johnson, Department of Human Resources, 1225 Lady Street, Columbia SC 29201. All questions must be received by February 17, 2014. Citizens are asked to submit one question per person.

The other segments of the assessment process will be held in executive session and will not be open to the public.

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

February 11, 2014

Contact: Leshia Utsey @ 422-3057

CITY OFFICES TO CLOSE WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 12, 2014 DUE TO INCLEMENT WEATHER

Due to the extreme winter weather conditions and the projected high possibility of ice on local roads, the City of Columbia will be closed on tomorrow, Wednesday, February 12, 2014 for all city operations, with the exception of essential services.

All public safety employees and those staff that have been deemed as essential will be on duty of will be on standby in case additional human resources are needed during the storm

A decision regarding operations for City of Columbia on Thursday, February 13, 2014 will be made based on the status of road conditions and weather conditions and media outlets will be notified.

City leadership will continue to monitor the weather and will make any necessary changes as they deem appropriate. Any updates regarding public safety conditions will be provided as information becomes available.



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

February 12, 2014

Contact: Public Relations at 803-545-3020

Love Our Hearts Walk on Friday, February 14th

pio@columbiasc.net | www.columbiasc.net

The City of Columbia Love Our Hearts Walk scheduled for Friday, February 14 has been cancelled due to the inclement weather this week. City resources needed to plan the walk were not available due to emergency preparedness operations.



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

February 12, 2014

Contact: Leshia Utsey @ 422-3057

CITY OFFICES TO CLOSE THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 13, 2014

DUE TO INCLEMENT WEATHER **Garbage Collection Schedule Changes Announced**

Due to the extreme winter weather conditions and the projected high possibility of ice on local roads, the City of Columbia will be closed on tomorrow, Thursday, February 13, 2014 for all city operations, with the exception of essential services. Garbage and recyclables will not be picked on tomorrow, February 13, however Solid Waste crews will be working an adjusted schedule and garbage and recyclables will be picked up one day later that the regular schedule. All Thursday customers will get their garbage/recyclables picked up on Friday, February 14 and Friday customers will receive service on Saturday, February 15.

All public safety employees and those staff that have been deemed as essential will be on duty of will be on standby in case additional human resources are needed during the storm

A decision regarding operations for the City of Columbia on Friday, January 14, 2014 will be made based on the status of road

conditions and weather conditions and media outlets will be notified.

City leadership will continue to monitor the weather and will make any necessary changes as they deem appropriate. Any updates regarding public safety conditions will be provided as information becomes available.



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

February 13, 2014

Contact: Leshia Utsey @ 422-3057

CITY OFFICES TO CLOSE FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 14, 2014

DUE TO INCLEMENT WEATHER

Solid Waste to Collect Garbage ONLY
Due to Adjusted Schedule
No Pickup for Recyclables or Yard Debris

Due to the extreme winter weather conditions and the projected high possibility of ice on local roads, **the City of Columbia will be closed on tomorrow**, **Friday**, **February 14**, **2014** for all city operations, with the exception of essential services.

The City of Columbia Solid Waste pickup schedule has changed. All Thursday and Friday customers are asked to place rolls carts/garbage only on the curbs before 10 a.m. tomorrow morning, Friday, February 14, 2014. Solid Waste crews will not be picking up recyclables or yard debris in order to focus solely on garbage pickup. Solid Waste employees will be working an adjusted schedule and need to handle garbage pickups only in order to maximize time and cover additional territory, due to an adjusted work schedule. Please place roll carts only on the curbs by 10 a.m. tomorrow, Friday, February 14 (no recylables and

no yard trash or debris will be picked up). Solid Waste will return to a regular schedule next week. Please contact the Customer Care Center at 545-3300 if you have questions or need more information. The cooperation and patience of our citizens is appreciated during this winter storm period.

All public safety employees and those staff that have been deemed as essential will be on duty / standby in case additional human resources are needed during the storm recovery period.

City leadership will continue to monitor the weather and will make any necessary changes as they deem appropriate. Any updates regarding public safety conditions will be provided as information becomes available.



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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

February 13, 2014

Contact: Jada Hubbard @ 545-3200

Drew Wellness Center to Open on an Adjusted Schedule Tomorrow, Friday, February 14, 2014

Drew Wellness Center will open on a an adjusted schedule on tomorrow, Friday, February 2014. The facility will open from 12:00 p.m. until 6:00 p.m. for all members and non-members who would like to use the wellness center's facilities. Non-members will be asked to pay the normal daily rate for services.

The facility will operate for 6 hours in order to allow public access, while also ensuring that patrons and employees can be off the roads before temperatures drop and highways tend to freeze over.

For those who may have experienced cabin fever over the last few days, Drew Wellness Center will be the ideal location to get some exercise and physical activity on the walking track, in the pool or at the gym.

For information or more details regarding daily rates, call Drew Wellness Center tomorrow after 12 p.m. at 803-545-3200.